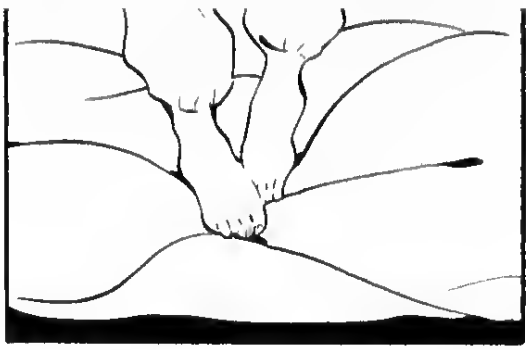


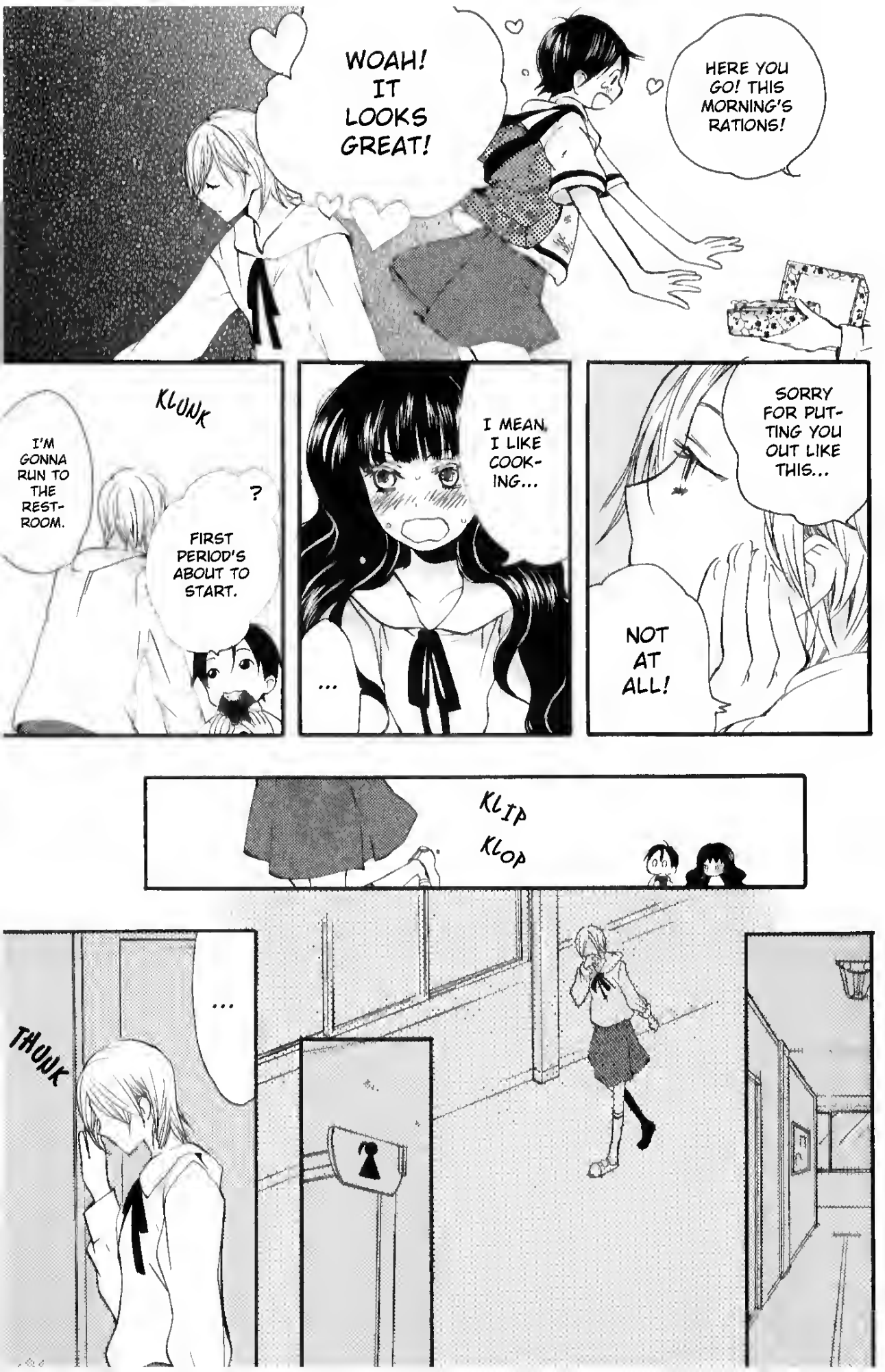
EPHEMERAL ASTERISM

I WONDER IF CHOKO'S STILL UP...
I WONDER IF HANA-CHAN'S ALREADY ASLEEP...
IT'D BE NICE IF WE WERE WATCHING THE SAME SHOW...
SHE'S GOT AN EARLY DAY TO-MORROW...
SO SHE PROBABLY WENT TO BED HOURS AGO...

I wonder what the girl I love is thinking about right now...

YAWN~
HEY!
COVER YOUR MOUTH WHEN YOU YAWN.
MMH...
DIDN'T GET ENOUGH SLEEP?
YEAH...
I STAYED UP WAY TOO LATE WATCHING BAD TV...
NERUNERU-SENSEI? I WATCHED THAT TOO!
YOU DID? I'M AMAZED YOU COULD WATCH THAT WITHOUT CRINGING!
BORING PEOPLE LIKE THEM SHOULDN'T EVEN CALL THEMSELVES ACTORS...
They should just go back to the country side!
TALK ABOUT HARSH...
Yeesh...
Not that I'm surprised...
RATTLE

GOOOOD MORNING!
THUNK
GOOD MORNING, HANA-CHAN!
HEY! MORNING, CHOKO!
I'M STARV-ING...
DON'T WORRY! I BROUGHT IT!
RUSTLE
GOOD MORNING TO YOU TOO, MI-TSUMI!
MORN-ING.

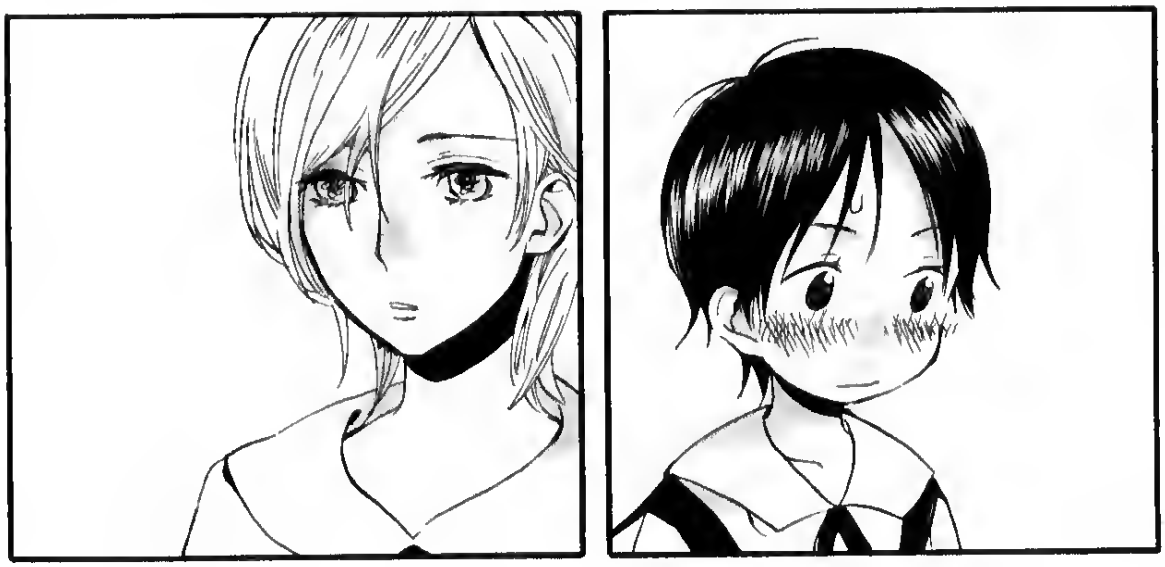

WOAH! IT LOOKS GREAT!
HERE YOU GO! THIS MORNING'S RATIONS!
KLUNK
I'M GONNA RUN TO THE REST-ROOM.
?
FIRST PERIOD'S ABOUT TO START.
I MEAN, I LIKE COOK-ING...
...
SORRY FOR PUT-TING YOU OUT LIKE THIS...
NOT AT ALL!
KLIP KLOP
...
THUNK

SHE'S SO CUTE!
SH-
SHE...
SIGH
MY CHILD-HOOD FRIEND CHOKO IS SO ADOR-ABLE...
IN FRONT OF THE GIRL SHE LIKES...
I...
I PROBABLY LIKE HER...

Whew
I'VE GOTTA HIDE IT!
Stay cool...
PING PONG
Oops.
BETTER HURRY.
I'M SORRY I'M LATE, MA'AM ...
Yes, yes
TAKE YOUR SEAT.
HUP!
MITSUMII~N!

PRACTICE OVER AL-READY?
YEP! WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, MITSUMIN? YOU'RE NOT WITH CHOKO?
OH, I SEE...
SHE WANTED TO FINISH SOME-THING, SO SHE TOLD ME NOT TO WAIT UP.
Choko's in the arts and crafts club.
I'LL HEAD HOME AFTER I DROP THIS OFF.
SEE YOU LATER.
HUH...
TAP
TAP
...
HUH?
M-ME... AND YOU?
YEAH!
FLAP FLAP
LET'S GO HOME TOGETHER!
...
WHAT IS IT?

UM...
JUST THE TWO OF US?
WHAT WOULD WE EVEN TALK ABOUT?
YOU DON'T WANT TO?
OH! ...er?
THEY'RE TOGETH-ER...
...
...HEY, MITSUMI-CHAN...
THAT'S NOT IT. IT'S JUST...
I'M GONNA BE A WHILE...
YOU AND CHOKO ARE REALLY CLOSE, HUH?
I...
WE'VE ...
KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR A LONG TIME.
I WISH WE...
COULD BE FRIENDS TOO, MIT-SUMIN.



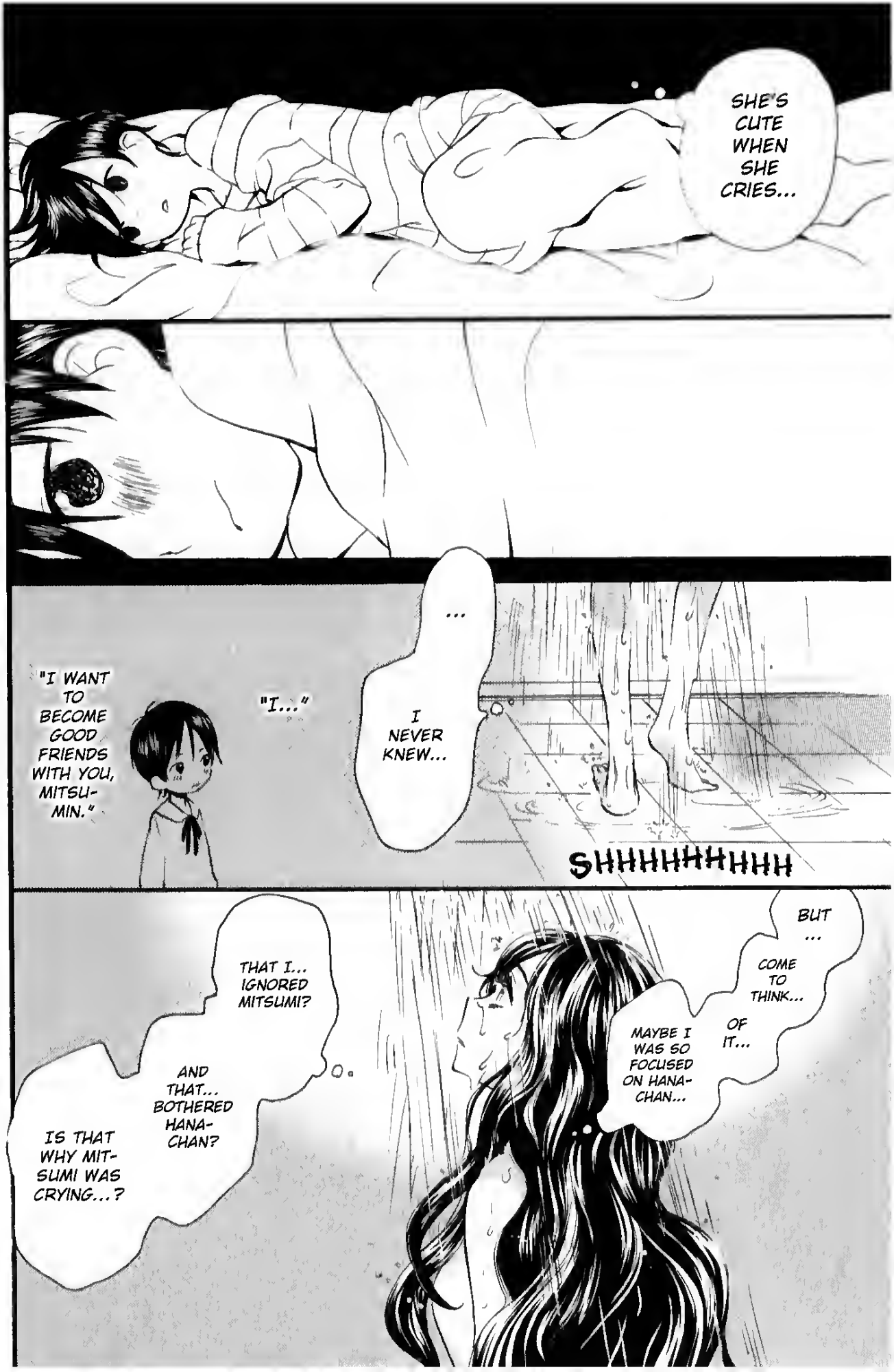
HUH?

WHAT? NO WAY.
HOLD ON A MINUTE.
I...
I THOUGHT ...
WE WERE FRIENDS ...
YOU KNOW, EVEN IF I DON'T SHOW IT MUCH...
YEAH! I KNOW.
BECAUSE I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU!

...
SHE...
THEN...
SHE... SAW ME?
HUH?
NO WAY...
SHE SAW ME?!
WHAT?
THE TRUTH IS YOU'RE REALLY EXPRES-SIVE, RIGHT?
I THINK IT'S REALLY CUTE.
KNOWS?
CHOKO DOESN'T KNOW?
I'M GUESS-ING...

...
JUST... ACT LIKE..
NOTHING HAP-PENED...
MITSU-MIN...
I DIDN'T MEAN TO MAKE YOU CRY!
OH!
ARE YOU OKAY?!
YARGH!
PLEASE ...
HANA-CHAN ...
DIDN'T REPLY...
...

HANA-CHAN AND ME...
CHOKO AND HANA-CHAN...
ME AND CHOKO...
WOOOOOO
MITSUMIN LIKES CHOKO...
I KNEW IT...
...
CHOKO LIKES ME...
and
(She knows)
Like
this?!
What's so great about this pip-squeak?
So Obvious
THINGS ARE FINE LIKE THEY ARE NOW.
REALLY...


SHE'S CUTE WHEN SHE CRIES...
...
I NEVER KNEW...
"I..."
"I WANT TO BECOME GOOD FRIENDS WITH YOU, MITSU-MIN."
SHHHHHHHHHH
BUT ...
COME TO THINK... OF IT...
MAYBE I WAS SO FOCUSED ON HANA-CHAN...
THAT I... IGNORED MITSUMI?
AND THAT... BOTHERED HANA-CHAN?
IS THAT WHY MIT-SUMI WAS CRYING...?

MAYBE I...
WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER OFF NOT KNOWING?
Mitsumi...
MITSUMI!
HMM?
WHATCHA LOOKIN' AT?
PING
Next!
Here I go!
Bring it on!
OVER THERE.
THE SOFT-BALL TEAM.
DO YOU KNOW HER?
HANA-CHAN. SHE'S IN OUR CLASS.
The small, cute one.
HUH?
WHO?
I DON'T KNOW ANYONE LIKE THAT!
Listen here, you...
WE CHANGED CLASSES OVER A MONTH AGO!
NOT INTERESTED.
Harumph!

SKR
EEK
WHOA!
THAT HAD TO HURT!
TEP TEP TEP
OOH!
SHE'S FAST!
SHIVER
WHAP

INTER-
ESTED
NOW?
IT'S THAT
COOL GIRL
FROM
CLASS...
SMILE
!
BLUUUUUSH

WHEN SHE BECAME SO DEAR TO ME...
THAT WAS PROBABLY...
WHEN IT ALL STARTED.
REALLY EXIST?
EVEN IF IT MEANS DRAGGING OUT THINGS SO IMPORTANT THAT YOU WANTED TO LOCK THEM UP AND THROW AWAY THE KEY...
DO ANSWERS THAT MUST BE GIVEN...

GOOD, EVERYTHING'S FINE.
JUST THE SAME AS ALWAYS...
IF YOU MIX IN SEASONED MUSHROOMS AFTERWARDS INSTEAD OF COOKING THEM WITH THE RICE, THEY STAY CRISP!
NOM NOM
Eeek!
I'M DROOLING!
TODAY, I MADE RICE BALLS WITH MUSHROOMS!
HERE!
Good morning!
Morning
HERE.
...
IT'S SUPER GOOD!
I KNOW YOU DON'T EAT MUCH, BUT...
YOU'LL AT LEAST TASTE-TEST IT FOR ME, WON'T YOU?
...?

IN THE END...
I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO EAT IT RIGHT AWAY.
SAY, MITSU-MIN...
HOW DO YOU SEE CHOKO? A FRIEND OR SOME-THING ELSE?
HOWDY!
THIS SEAT TAKEN?
...

I DUNNO...
DO YOU WANNA SMOOCH HER AND STUFF?
"YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY SHE WAS CRYING?"
"THEN COME WITH ME."
...
I DUNNO ...
BUT...
SOME-TIMES...
I JUST WANNA HUG HER...

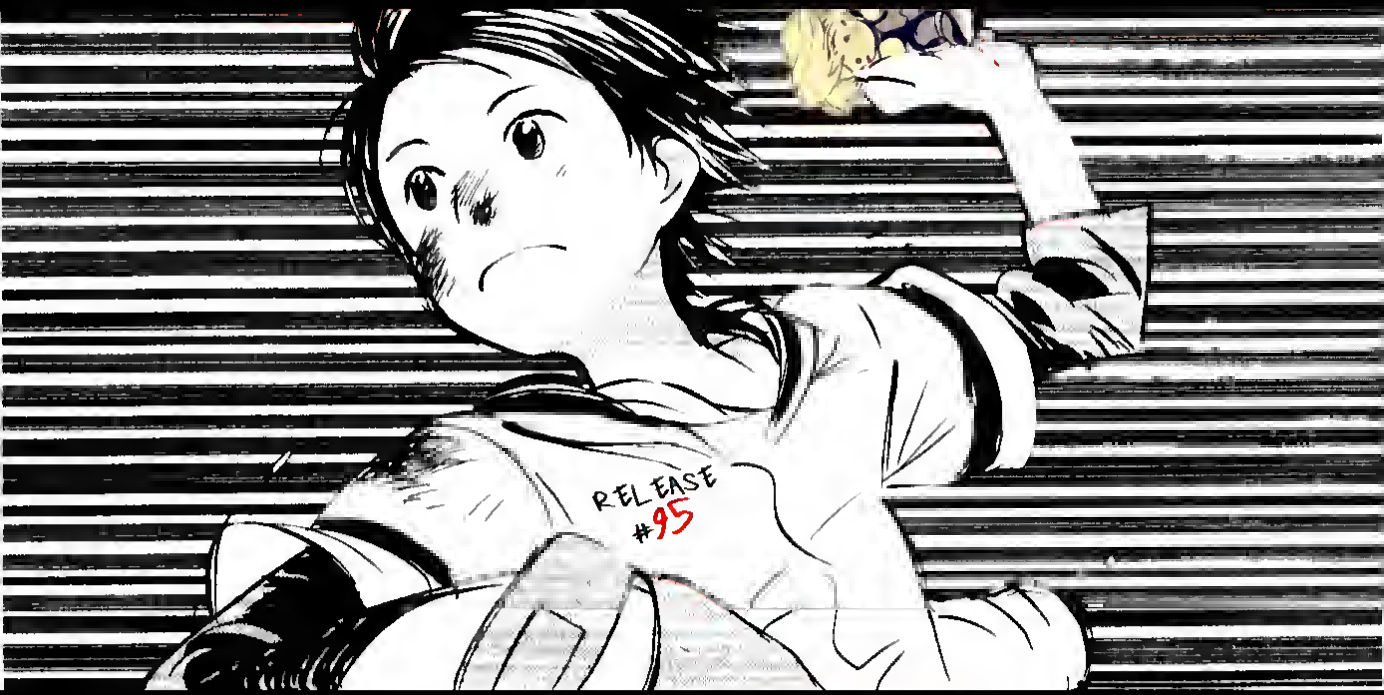
UM, COULD YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES?
?
HUH. THEN YOU'RE LIKE ME.
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT...
WHY DON'T ALL THREE OF US BE GOOD FRIENDS?
I'LL WATCH YOU, WHO'S HEAD OVER HEELS FOR CHOKO...
WATCHING CHOKO, WHO'S HEAD OVER HEELS FOR ME...
AND FALL HEAD OVER HEELS FOR YOU.

HOW ABOUT IT?
...!
WOULD THAT...
REALLY BE OKAY?
THAT SEEMS LIKE SUCH A CON-VENIENT SOLU-TION...
THAT THE ADULTS WILL GET MAD AT US.
THE REPLY, RESEMBLING A NAÏVE WISH, OF A GIRL...
WHO DOESN'T WANT ANY-THING TO CHANGE...

I WANT IN ON IT TOO!
No fair!
SQUEEZE
Oh!
GLOMP
CHOKO!
WHOMP
IT'S OKAY...
WITH US!
WHAT'RE YOU MAKING THAT CUTE FACE FOR?
HOW PATHETIC!

END

SCANNED BY: UNKNOWN // TRANSLATED, TYPESET AND EDITED BY: CARSTAIRS & RIN-UZUKI



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